



re • sil • ience

noun./ the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties

Trauma is an experience, not an incident. It is the emotional and mental result of abnormally stressful events that overwhelm your sense and safety, making you feel helpless. Victims/survivors of crime – and anyone who has experienced trauma – often experience long term effects.

Resiliency is commonly referred to as the ability to bend – not break – when overwhelming experiences occur. This can include common, long term effects of trauma, such as flashbacks, anxiety, confusion or disorientation.

Consider these points for building resiliency in your journey.

MINDFULNESS PRACTICE

When we are mindful of our breathing and being alive, we can reduce stress and free our minds – even momentarily – from the uncertainties around us. Setting a timer to take simply 5 minutes out per day to exist in the moment and focus on being present in our bodies can have powerful cognitive restructuring impacts.



GOAL SETTING

Writing goals requires both clarification and commitment. By clearly defining areas for self-development that you want to grow into and the steps to guide you there, you are actively creating positive momentum and a map to follow on your resiliency building journey. You can even start by setting goals in some of the below areas.

SUPPORT NETWORK

A strong support network is a collection of close family, friends, peers and mentors who can help in unsteady times. Nurturing and cultivating those relationships is an investment in yourself. You deserve healthy, supportive relationships.

STORYTELLING

Writing your story – even if you never share it outwardly – creates an opportunity to reclaim ownership of your narrative. When traumatic experiences have taken away your feeling of control, writing your story can give you back that power.

“ I can be changed by what happened to me.
But I refuse to be reduced by it.
- Maya Angelou ”

GRATITUDE

Actively practicing gratitude is not dismissing the negative experiences in life, but rather, it is the balanced ability to also see the positive. Gratefulness helps us widen our mental and emotional openness, diminishes depression and anxiety, and inspires hope.

HUMOR

Harnessing the power of laughter can lower heart rate, relax muscles, and signal to the nervous system that you are safe. It can remind us that difficult moments are not as catastrophic as they may feel. It can create a pause so that we can pivot to problem solving, instead of spiraling.

FLEXIBILITY

Adaptability is your willingness to change in order to respond to different situations; flexibility is the ease in which you adapt. Practice pausing when a challenging situation arises, allowing your nervous system to calm before you respond. The more you do this, the more you will build your flexibility.

SELF-CARE

Caring for your mind and body, daily, reduces fatigue and burn out, and is a vital step to bouncing back in stressful situations. Start with the basics: drink enough water, get enough sleep. Build on that by developing a full self-care plan that includes physical, emotional, and spiritual components.

STRENGTHS

Personal strengths are your individual virtues that comprise what is best about your character. These can be bravery, appreciation of beauty, curiosity, honesty, kindness, a love of learning, etc. Leveraging your identified strengths can take practice, but can lead to greater confidence, productivity, and engagement in relationships.

BUILDING SELF

If you begin practicing what is above, you will be lightyears ahead in building self-confidence and self-awareness. Take it a step further by practicing self-compassion. Do this through talking to yourself like you would talk to someone else – with kindness. Catch and replace your judgmental thoughts with understanding and validation.

Remember that building resilience takes time and practice. Start with small, measurable steps. It doesn't matter if you can only do a small thing now. You can build on that small success. Be gracious and patient with yourself, and celebrate your successes along the way.